A Two Weeks' Trip in the Wallowa Mountains with the Astoria Angoras

By AUGUST HILDEBRAND, *Historian*

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When you look at the map of the state of Oregon, you will notice in the extreme northwest corner—Clatsop county with the city of Astoria as its county seat, and in the extreme northeast corner, you will perceive Wallowa county with the city of Enterprise as its capital.

In this latter county are the Wallowa mountains, to the north of which is located Wallowa lake, a body of water about two miles wide and four to five miles long. This lake has been mentioned as the home, or rather spawning grounds, of the famous Blue Backs (a specie of salmon) that migrate, after hatching in or near the lake or the mountain streams that empty into it, through the various rivers and the Columbia, past Astoria into the Pacific ocean to return to the lake four years later to reproduce their kind. The center of Wallowa mountains is practically Eagle Cap mountain. It forms the fountain head of many rivers flowing in all directions of the compass.

We have mentioned all this so you may more readily understand what is said later. The following narrative is supposed to portray to you an outing of the Angora Hiking club of Astoria, Oregon, July 8, 1928, to these mountains.

Were Well Provided

Well prepared, provided with sleeping bags, alpine sticks and other high climbing paraphernalia, we started Sunday morning by auto about 7 a. m. By the time we arrived in Portland, a select party of five mustered in for the trip. The following comprised the high climbing squad: John Berry, chief guide; Fred U. Robin, rear guide; Jean Weston, Axel Ramvick and the historian, August Hildebrand, as rank and file.

Away we went, again by auto, from Portland about 11 a. m. via the very scenic Columbia river highway, to describe which should not be necessary, as its fame is world-wide and every Oregonian should have enough pride in him or her, in what is theirs—to have traversed its entire length from Seaside to The Dalles.

To behold the Pacific, the dunes, the plains, the broad river, the growing cities, the rocky cliffs, the lofty mountains, the forest, the rivers, the waterfalls, the cataracts, the Cascades, the flowers, the shrubbery, the stately trees, the magnificent bridges, the canal and locks—and wonderful highway—all should make you proud to be called an Oregonian. In this I include the citizens of Washington as well. Yes, the Pacific Northwest is a paradise. Do you know and appreciate it?

Over Old Oregon Trail

Passing the beautiful city of Hood River and The Dalles, we wended our way eastward over the Old Oregon Trail, arriving in a stretch of country that is not quite as green as the part we are used to. However, every place has a beauty of its own. You see the rocky lava flows in all their fantastic forms. In places this flow looked like molten lead—after, like on Hallowe'en night, one drops it hot in cold water to contemplate the future out of the resultant forms. Other places look like natural rock gardens, however, minus the flowers. Other locations look as if they were the remnants of medieval ramparts that might have served as repelling fortresses for defenders. Among all this scenery, one beholds horses and cattle grazing on the hillsides and in the vales, eating the sparce dry, brown

grass that covers the dry, sandy soil where there are no rocks and cliffs, trees only as planted by man add to the scenery, however, sage brush in abundance.

As we traveled along, we visioned the Old Oregon Trail as traversed by the old Oregon pioneers during the migration in the 1840's. However, instead of a trail, one beholds now a well paved highway winding along the Columbia over the then desert. Instead of the bleached bones of oxen and other animals that marked the path, one now passes over the dried carcasses of jack rabbits and other small animals—animals that got confused by the glaring headlights and were run over by the swiftly revolving rubber cushioned wheels of progress, that took the place of the disks of the lumbering ox carts and covered wagons with their dangling water pails.

Visioned Old Times

As we purred along without effort at the rate of 35 per hour, we visioned as of old, the creaking of the wheels, the tired, thirsty oxen, the shouting of the drivers, the sighs of the women and the cries of the babies, all longing for the end of the trail—the Western Oregon Country.

We passed wheat fields, some just in the harvesting—Mary Hill to the left across the river in Washington, where a romantic character tried to imitate one of the castles on the Rhine with more or less success. However, I cannot help thinking that if he had selected Tongue Point near Astoria as a site, it would have been a positive success.

Arlington, Heppner Junction, Castle Rock, Boardman, Irrigon, Umatilla, all more or less the same scenery with the placid Columbia to the left, and across this river was the state of Washington, where one could notice the same kind of country. At Umatilla we left the river and traveled in a southerly direction. The rolling plains rolled higher, the hills grew in elevation.

Noticed Blue Mountains

In the afternoon we noticed in the east the Blue mountains in the distance, with thunder clouds reflecting red and blue gray in the evening sun. The Cascades behind us showed plainly the snow capped cones of the higher peaks. Near Pendleton we passed to our right the "Round Up" stadium, renowned for its re-enacted frontier days—depicting the "wild and wooly west" of old; with its wild horses and cattle and wilder cowboys and cowgirls—and "savage" Indians.

By about eight in the evening we rolled into Pendleton. The first impression of this city—experiencing the prevailing heat and—noticing the effort of its citizens to cool off—was that it was "a place of shirt sleeves and root beer." It must have been a heaven in Lager beer days—for the saloon man. In this city we camped over night.

Resuming our journey in the morning, we passed the Pendleton Woolen Mills—mills that do much (like the Round Up) to perpetuate the atmosphere of old, by manufacturing "genuine" Indian blankets and robes.

Leaving the Old Oregon Trail, which went to the right, we traveled in an easterly direction toward the Blue Mountains. These mountains,—covered more or less with trees—are about the size and elevation of our coast mountains. A winding loop road of about 20 miles brought us to an elevation of 4335 feet.

Characteristic of these mountains are the snow fences and cattle fences which are anchored, weighted with rocks to hold them in place. Wheat fields and grazing fields are in the canyons and even on the mountain tops. Some fields were plowed, which we were told is summer fallowed, to be in shape to bear grain next year. On the summit of these mountains we saw several objects in line that looked like electric light posts or small marine light houses. Upon inspection, we failed to find any lettering signs, but conjectured

that these were electric aviation beacons.

When we arrived at La Grande, we could tell we were in a Land of Butter and Cream—and also, by the grain harvesting machinery, that we were in a grain country. That it is also a hot place to live in, was evidenced by the prevailing temperature and the ice chests, refrigerators, lawn swings, sun umbrellas and summer clothing displayed in the stores.

Is Fertile Country

The city of La Grande is lying on the Grand Ronde river in what is called the Grand Ronde country. This is a kind of a large round valley, closed in or surrounded on the east by the Wallowa mountains. Grand Ronde is a very fertile country of grain and alfalfa.

Continuing our way we made a large half circle in a northerly direction over some smaller mountains, arriving in the Wallowa basin. This basin, about the size of Clatsop county, is of high elevation, say 4,000 to 5000 feet and is bordered to the south by the Wallowa mountains, whence arise the numerous rivers that water this valley. Wallowa basin is green. It is a grass and dairy proposition.

Many splendid cattle are at home here. Whatever wheat fields we saw, did not look as good as those in the Grand Ronde country. It looked more like Clatsop county than any other location we had passed through—clover, grass, some milk producing cattle and some of the beef type.

Traveling in a semi-circle through this basin, touching the cities of Elgin, Minam, Wallowa, Lostine, Enterprise and Joseph, we arrived at Wallowa Lake hotel campgrounds at about 5 p. m.

The Wallowa country was the last stand of the Indians against white civilization. The overwhelming of the Redmen and their heroic last efforts made interesting history for the Pacific Northwest, but it is a story long enough to warrant a special effort some day for the historian. Suffice it now to say, the Wallowa basin, the river, the lake and mountains was the last refuge of the then independent Indians—and with its fertile lands, containing wild animals, the mountains that were the homes of hardier ones—and the rivers and lakes that contained an abundance of fish, was well adapted to sustain the tribes in their effort to live. There is now an Indian cemetery at the lower end of the lake containing the body of one of the last independent Indian chiefs — Joseph.

Wallowa Lake hotel situated in a pine tree grove at the head of the lake is a regular mountain hostelry built rustic, but finished in a pleasing style. It has an air of refinement—and the service, of which we had occasion later to avail ourselves, left nothing to wish for better. The prices were reasonable.

We explored the lake and surroundings. The lake is a pleasant body of water. To the north, the rolling lands of Wallowa; immediately to the south, the towering, snow clad Wallowa mountains that terminated in rugged, sharp pinnacles, with cliffs that looked like ruins of ancient castles.

We camped that night near the lake; we felt that the atmosphere, even during night, was considerably warmer than in Western Oregon; we found our sleeping bag bedding more than abundant.

In the morning the saddling of the mules afforded some entertainment. This was their first tryout of the season. Some acted very docile, others only medium so, and some very hostile.

However, man is born the master. In a duel between the hostler and one particular mule, it was a sort of kicking contest between man and beast, with man coming out of the affair victor. The kicks were all given mule fashion—not in the Parisian ballet style. Perhaps the hostler had never learned this high kick.

Having received his education on a mule ranch, it was nothing but proper to return the kicks in the honorable mule style. Kicks

below the belt were apparently barred. The opponents squared except from opposite directions. The mule led, but missed the mark. The hostler watched when the mule bared his guard by letting his hind feet down. It was apparent the mule did not know the scientific part of the game. Well, he received a "solar plexus" right square in the soft part of his hind anatomy. I do not know how to describe it more correctly, as I mislaid my dictionary on "Roberts Rules of Order" of the prize ring. Well—he, the mule, was thoroughly surprised and was a good mule after this.

All the animals were in splendid condition. One particularly spry young, well built mule felt the hind surcingle tickling on the soft part. He let his displeasure known by letting both hind heels go in the direction of the stars—and—I tell you, a mule is a long, long animal when he stretches.

It all made genuine Pendleton round-up entertainment for the writer without the cost attached to such a pleasure.

Our first hike was to trail the mules who packed our belongings to the base camp. We passed one place called by a sign "The Methodist Camp Ground." We thought then we were in congenial surroundings. However, we were rudely upset when we passed another sign reading— "Hell's half acre!" We had reason to think of these two expressions when we beheld afterwards the different scenery in these mountains. Yes—it was very pleasant in places—but, the devil surely had his abode among some of the cliffs.

Farther on we passed the electric water power plant of the Pacific Power and Light company, the same company that operates at Astoria. An obliging young man showed us the plant and explained that the water was conveyed one mile through a 16-inch pipe with 1200 feet fall, generating 1200 horsepower. However, there were thousands of horsepower as yet going to waste.

Farther into the mountains we went, up a very narrow cliff bound canyon over a well defined trail, but rough, strewn with rocks, in places steep, around boulders,—within sight and sound of a cascading mountain river. I say river, as quite an amount of water is confined in this narrow grand gorge.

We arrived in camp at Moccasin lake about 4 p. m. We had traveled a distance of about thirteen miles. When the last stragglers arrived there was rejoicing. We had passed the following lakes: Unit, Horseshoe, Lee and Douglas. Above us were as yet Mirror and Upper Mirror Lakes. All these lakes were in successively higher elevations. We also passed some lily ponds, however, these do not count as lakes.

Mosquitos Arrive

Lunch was served and all partook of a substantial supper that tasted well. In camp the mosquitos introduced themselves quite rudely. They insisted particularly in making the acquaintance of Axel Ramvick. However much he repulsed their advance, the more was their insistence. At last he contrived with the aid of a bandana a sort of hood that made him look like an Arabian sheik. This contrivance made the mosquitos even more annoying and poor Axel had to retire eventually to his tent and bury himself in his sleeping bag. During this day's hike, he had been detailed as the advance guard. He had kept up with the pack mules. This perhaps also had something to do with his early retirement.

Wednesday we rested in camp. This camp was on an elevated terrace right on the lake near a small waterfall that furnished us with water for the kitchen, a cool spring nearby our drinking water. Snowdrifts were all around us, terminating in the lake. Camp elevation was about 7000 feet. Eagle Cap was towering, right in front, across the lake, above us.

Eagle Cap loomed up about the size and labor of Saddle moun-

tain, near our Astoria, 3000 feet more. It all looked very rough, romantic and beautiful. Small trees scattering only. We seemed to be right in the center of a mountain range which was supposed to be about 10,000 feet elevation.

Cool and Fresh

It was not excessively cold, but nice, cool and fresh.

Early Thursday morning, after a real mountaineer breakfast of prunes and rice, we traveled toward the goal of our ambitions—Eagle Cap.

Traveling around the lake, over bowlders, snow drifts, small rivulets, we scaled the cliffs. On the snow drifts we noticed the red, microbic or atom-like animals that infest the glaciers of different mountains. Each footstep seemed to crush them ,as the imprints were of a redder hue than the snow itself. It looked as though we left bloody foot marks.

Grasshoppers seemed to have lost their way from the lower valleys. They were dazed with cold in the snow. The warm hand revived some remarkably quick. On the return trip we collected them for trout bait. The ascent was no particular effort, excepting a long, tedious grind. After we got to the ridge we followed to the very cap and recorded our names in a receptacle.

Worth Recording

The day before a lone climber from Portland had preceded us as the first man on top this year. He crowded us out of this distinction. However, we wish to compliment him on his effort, which was certainly a deed well worth recording. For this reason we copied his notation in the record book, and the following is it: "July 11, 1928. James Harlow, 1387 Kelly St., Portland, Oregon. Hiked it alone. Left Wallowa lake at 5 this morning, passed Mocassin lake at 10, arrived summit Eagle Cap at 12 noon. The air is slightly hazy and warm. Wonderful view. Coming again. Am I the first up this year? I am going back to Portland tomorrow, but hope to visit this indescribable, beautiful wonderland again. Yours for mountains. James Harlow."

The following was our record left on the mountain top:

"July 12, 1928. Camped at and left Mocassin lake 6:15 a. m., arrived on top 9:30. Looks like rain in the Grand Ronde and Wallowa basins. View very good. Wonderful weather for a climb. Slightly cloudy. Not very much wind. Not very hot.

P. S. The Angora Hiking club of Astoria, Oregon, is the 100 per cent hiking club of North America. (Record up to date.) The following members of this club started on this trip—Signed: John Berry, chief guide; Axel Ramvick, chief scout; August Hildebrand, historian; Mrs. John Weston, mountain climber; Fred U. Robin, veteran mountain climber as rear guide.

P. S. It is starting to darken. A few drops of rain are falling. It looks as though we are in for a storm."

Hurried Over Snow

We traveled down in a hurry over very steep snow glaciers. However, the snow was soft and afforded medium good footing. The threatening storm held off. Everything was quiet toward evening. It seemed like a calm before a tempest. Later the sun was lower in the horizon, that is, being between high mountains, we were not able to witness the sunset. However, we were fully compensated by witnessing the reflection on the different mountain tops and snow. The low sun threw its rays through the different valleys in such an angle so as to produce a beautiful evening glow and evening shadows.

The smoke from the camp fire was at the same time drifting and settling over the quiet waters of the lake giving it a transparent blue hue. The lower patches of snow remained pure white and, of course, what few trees there were, dark green. The shadows or mountain rills more or less dark; heaven above deep blue, billowed

lower with white, gray and dark ominous looking clouds, through all of which the sun pierced its rays and colored all with red glows of different shades. As the sun dipped lower, the colors grew in intensity. It all was like a dream in Fairyland.

The Storm

The quietness told of something to come. Hastily we fastened our tent stays and anchored them more securely.

The warnings we had on Eagle Cap and all afternoon seemed to evolve themselves into realities. The performance started as if staged for our benefit.

It started with distant lightning that flashed way beyond our near mountain tops. It moved nearer, the growling thunder became louder—and in no time, it was flashing from mountain top to mountain top, and from space to mountain top. It was straight lightning, zig zag lightning, rocket lightning, ball lightning, jumping lightning and chain lightning.

It was real fire works with all the different pyrotechnical contrivances in perfect working order, discharging in almost perfect rythm, here — there—yonder — back—to the left—to the right—again in front—in about the time it takes to say this.

In Western Oregon, it is a peel of lightning and in due time, according to distance, a clap of thunder. Here the thunder was a continual rolling from mountain top to mountain top, re-echoing in the valleys. All of it was, as if the Titans of the universe were hurling fire balls. The thunder sounded as if the gods were angry and were growling to and cursing each other. Rain fell in large drops. The different partly burned trees, near our camp and on the hillsides—which had been ignited in previous storms, told us plainly of the danger. Over an hour of this performance and we gingerly, prudently, hesitatingly, or perhaps reassured of more safety, we don't know which—we bundled ourselves into our water proof sleeping bags, and let the storm roll by. However, I will confess, I thought of the ostrich when he buries his head in the sand.

Under Blue Sky

Morning found us under a deep, blue sky.

That day, Friday, we crossed the lake in a cranky boat and went over a pass to the left of Eagle Cap. Snow fields galore. From the top of the pass, we beheld Glacier lake below. The elevation of this lake is perhaps 8,000 feet. It is a wonderful lake, surrounded by steep, sharp mountain pinnacles streaked with snow and ice. The lake was as yet about half frozen over.

Saturday morning the first question was from the chief guide who asked: "Did you see the deer in camp last night?" No! You must have been dreaming! Respectable deers are not out in such unearthly hours!

After breakfast we started for what might be termed Eagle Cap No. 4. It was the same ridge of mountains. It has many peaks. This was the fourth peak to the west and was the termination of this ridge. The climb was of no particular effort either, simply similar to Eagle Cap, excepting in a different direction—and not quite as high.

A surprise was in store for us. During the ascent we traveled over some snow fields—and behold, in the snow were plainly the imprints of deer feet, the tracks leading straight over the mountain from Eagle Creek valley in line to our camp in the Wallowa Creek. Well! Well!—our chief guide had not visioned double after all. It was no idle dream—real facts stared us in the face. If we had been hunters we might have been tempted to follow. Our quest was, however, scenery and our aim the preservation of all wild life.

Feasted on Scenery

After registering on top, we lunched and feasted on the remarkable scenery. As far as we could see in every direction, mountain tops and mountain pin-

nacles. Some were white from marble and snow, some darker because of granite, some were plainly volcanic as of ash and cinders and many were fissured with dark gray basalt rock. All had streaks and patches of snow on them.

To the west through an opening, we could see the Grande Ronde country; to the north, the Wallowa basin, the Blue mountains in the distance and also mountains in Idaho, valleys and lakes below, ridges and peaks of the Wallowa mountains all around and of more or less even height. The world looked as though it was standing up edgeways.

Wending our way back, we used the same tactics as coming down Eagle Cap, sliding and walking down the steeper snow fields. Sliding was more or less dangerous as the snow generally ended in a jungle of boulders and rocks.

On this trip we saw something that occurs only in high mountains and then not often:

The glacier waters from Eagle Cap divided into two directions—part going westerly through Lostine valley and part going northerly to Upper Mirror Lake and all the different lakes to Wallowa river. Lostine valley had the looks of a high Alpine valley. It looked scooped out as if by a prehistoric glacier. Flowers, pink and white heather and grass in abundance—and a winding mountain stream cascading down. There was a sparce sprinkling of high altitude, stunted trees and high, steep mountains on both sides.

Saw Marble Mountain

Sunday we went in a more northerly direction to the right, on a sort of a picnic, to Hurricane Pass. Here we beheld Marble mountain or as others call it, "Matterhorn." This mountain looked as though somewhat higher than Eagle Cap. The horn or peak was white, the ridge a little darker and near the horn is a brown formation. The ridge was very sharp, overhanging and rough, and looked difficult to climb.

Monday we started on a reconoitering trip, again over Hurricane Pass, and kept well under the top ridge that terminated, or rather, the center of which was the mentioned Marble Mountain. This proved to be some mountain climb—much more difficult than any we had experienced so far, and somewhat dangerous on account of loose, overhanging, broken pinnacles above and dangerous rock slides below.

This was real mountaineering work. After much difficulty, we arrived on the ridge where we found that the other side was even steeper, going perpendicular down and forming very steep glaciers below in the hollow. We kept on the ridge pressing forward. Fred Robin was ahead and out of sight. It was a dangerous affair to go farther. We decided to tackle the mountain from Ice lake Valley approach the next day. However, Fred Robin pushed ahead. In camp afterwards he related that he had succeeded to the very horn, but had to slide on his stomach over part of the ridge, using his ice pick to pull himself along. We glory in his persistence, but prudence is perhaps not out of place even in mountain climbing. He made the first successful ascent from the southern exposure. Axel Ramvick and Mrs. Weston had not started on this venture. They were wise as to the risk involved.

We decided to break camp Tuesday, moving down to Wallowa Lake, hire horses to the foot of Marble mountain and scale the mountain by the way of Ice lake.

Early Tuesday the packer took our belongings down to Wallowa lake. We again hiked 13 miles past all the lakes enumerated before. However, all was now down grade and easier. When nearing the Wallowa Lake Camp, we experienced another thunder and lightning storm, however, of no particular intensity. Hail fell and in a few minutes the ground was covered with quite a layer of "mothballs." We had taken refuge under trees as these hail

mothballs were heavy enough to compel us to seek shelter. Rain fell also. We had not prepared for this and when we arrived in camp, we were well drenched.

We thought it best not to pitch our tents in the damp surroundings. We rented two camp tents with board floor and each with two fully furnished beds, and had supper at the hotel. It all worked out to perfection and with very little trouble.

Wednesday morning early, six saddle horses were waiting. We had spoken for a cowboy guide to take care of the horses, at the lake, while we climbed the mountain. This arrangement proved very satisfactory and convenient. Away we went in the early morning in single horse file with the cowboy leading the way—back into the mountains. We had imagined that the horse trail to Ice Lake was like the one to Moccasin Lake, steep and rough in places but tolerable. However, we were soon disillusioned on this point. Going from the main, well traveled trail to the right, we were up against a steep mountain side, over which flowed, through a steep cut in the rocky canyon, a waterfall. From a distance, it looked like Multnomah Falls, except that it contained very much more water, was much higher and seemed to leap in two or more off sets.

Encounter Steep Trail

Traveling near this waterfall ravine, we were soon against the real thing as far as steepness and roughness of the horse trail was concerned. In a zigzag course, winding over boulders, over tree roots and so forth, it went straight to heaven. It was a trail that would tax the ingenuity and endurance of a mountaineer on foot and here we were on horseback. The cowboy in the lead, Axel Ramvick, yours truly, Fred Robin, Mrs. Weston and John Berry in the order named.

Presently Mrs. Weston elected to climb afoot, Fred Robin, perhaps in a mood of chivalry, ditto —John Berry, perhaps for other reasons, ditto. We, our honorable selves, found no time nor a convenient place to climb off of our steed, who by the way, seemed to know the way and knew what he was doing. We somehow envied the before mentioned trio footing it and did not blame them at all for getting off. Just at this time, Axel Ramvick's horse (just ahead) caught his hind foot in the fork of a tree root. Oh horhors! Visions of a great catastrophe came to our minds. Miracles will happen—a vigorous twist, the foot was free, but in doing so the hind part of the animal swung over the abyss of the waterfall—a greater scare for us. Our heart stopped beating. We were thoroughly scared. However, the splendid little animal pawed and crawled with its front feet on the trail again.

Horse Wise One

Our horse was a wise one. He simply noted what was going on and gingerly but deftly avoided the root. During all this time, we did not ride Eastern Oregon cowboy style. It was simply a matter of hanging on to the horse in the best amateur fashion. We not only "touched leather" also hair, the mane most of the time, and at moments we even hugged the animal around the neck. Yes, these were caressing moments and fully appreciated. After about a half a mile, the trail was a little easier to travel.

Arriving at the lake, the cowboy rode right over boulders in the water, Ramvick followed. At this place our horse had to go over and down a large boulder. We shut our eyes, trusted to providence and let the horse slide. He had done this before, but it was something entirely new to us. We wonder, even now, how we managed to stay on. One slide—one jump, and the horse looked around wondering what we were scared about.

Stopped at Grove

We stopped in a grove of small pine trees. The cowboy got out his fishing tackle and remarked: "There is the trail up the moun-

tain; around the lake, over those boulders, up that bench, past that waterfall, over that snow field; climb around to the right, go to the left and you will soon be on top. I would take you closer on the horses but they cannot go around the lake, and you would get wet swimming. I would go along but I guess I lost nothing on top of Matterhorn. I am going to fish and watch you and the horses."

Around and up it went as indicated. It was a matter of toil, endurance and labor. The scenery at this lake and mountain was similar to the other lakes. This was Ice Lake. It contained no ice, was however, of very high elevation and contained ice the greater part of the year.

Near the top the mountain was rougher, more hazardous but not exceedingly so. It was some climb. The view was again wonderful. We all felt like conquering heroes. We recorded our names in a receptacle placed in a stone cairn that we built, as the first recorded registration on the mountain.

Saw Wonderful Colors

Retracing our steps in due time we again arrived in the pine grove. Going down the mountain, we noticed the wonderful coloring of the lake. Also that this lake perhaps, like many, or all, of the others, was formed by a prehistoric glacier, the angular form of the depressions of the mountains showing plainly the previous existence of a monster glacier terminating and forming, through the fall of its waters, the lake.

In fact, it seemed to us that the whole mountain range must have been at one time, very, very much higher, say at least double the elevation; that one great, grand glacier covered all; starting at Eagle Cap, terminating at Wallowa Lake, pushing out and forming moraines on the side of this lake and forming with sediment the Wallowa basin. The glacier successively receding, at different stages, finding softer material for its eroding waters, and perhaps aided by volcanic disturbances, formed the different lakes. What glaciers are left now, are simply the ends and remnants of former monster glories. We may be wrong in our conclusions, but at this late date, this is offered as our guess—and may be as correct as anyone's.

The lone fisherman had caught one lone fish all day. However, they started to bite when we prepared to go.

Before starting our return horseback trip, the historian confidentially took the cowboy aside and asked him if it was fashionable, or customary, to lead or ride a horse over difficult places. He assured me, that it was the custom to stay on—that no honorable cowboy would ever get off a horse at any place.

We were soon looking down the difficult half mile of the zigzag, rocky trail with the roaring waters to our right, a yawning canyon, steep mountain sides and a deep, deep valley below.

Down we went (the cowboy and Axel had stayed behind to finish fishing). Not very long and we felt like grabbing the horse's tail over our shoulders in order to hang on. Berry, Robins and Mrs. Weston were ahead. They got off. I thought I would stay on a while longer. Then a unison of voices, asking me to get off. I demurred.

"Mr. Hildebrand, you better get off."

"Yes, I know it, but—

Orders Were Obeyed

"Mr. Hildebrand, you get off" —was the final dictum of the chief guide. Orders had to be obeyed. I did not censure him, on the contrary—I was very, very glad to get off. Yes, I felt much better when my feet were on the ground. I remembered at the same time that there is a vast difference between a pen puncher and a cow puncher. The abilities go in different directions—and sure, I wanted to live to tell the tale. Farther below, Axel and the cowboy joined us—of course,

riding Eastern Oregon fashion. Asking Axel,—"Did you find it steep?" "Sure I did, but you see, next year I am going to attend an aviation school and I wanted to get previous experience. I believe this is a splendid place to get it."

Just then our cowboy broke into the conversation. Pointing back to the trail he said, "Do you see the bend in the canyon near the falls? Well, at this point sometime past, five pack mules lost their footings and tumbled into the whirling waters. Only one mule clambered out of the canyon. He lived only a few hours. We never saw the others; they no doubt, made good fish food.

Well, that night we had a "nightmare" but instead of dreaming about one horse, we had five mule ghosts bothering us.

Hard to Make

It is hard to make a comparison of the hazard of this trail. To some of the Saddle mountain climbers, I may explain, without a bit of exaggeration ,that this horse trail is as steep and as difficult as the steep, short trail of Saddle mountain—avoiding, of course, the ladders of the chimney by going over the bluff. This is saying something, but true.

Compared:—the long trail up our mountain is a picnic trail. When the Saddle mountain Auto Loop road is finished—all we need to do is to get some enterprising Eastern Oregon horseman and we can ride to the top of our matchless panoramic Saddle mountain in a rocking chair on the back of a mule. Sugar Loaf mountain and Tillamook Head Trail may also be easily traveled in this way. The horseback ride proved to be the thrill act of our outing. It was a novel experience.

In the different valleys and on the mountain sides, we saw many sheep feeding on the beautiful Alpine flowers and shrubbery. The gamboling lambs and their bleating gave some entertainment to the eye and ear and their wonderful climbing abilities among the cliffs and on the very steep mountain sides was cause for envy and admiration, from us mountaineers.

We have no statistics available as to which would give greater financial returns: flowers, berries, honey and more tourists, or sheep and some tourists. While I mention berries, there are none in these mountains excepting a few gooseberries.

Retraced Steps

Thursday we traveled by auto, retracing our way as we came. That night we camped at the beautiful apple city, Hood River.

Continuing our way the next day, going down the long mountain road, that is part of the Columbia river highway which has its apex, Crown Point:—When we were near the lower bridge that spans the Sandy river, Mr. Robins pointed to some rocks and boulders near the road and bridge, saying: "Many years ago, before the white man's time, those boulders tumbled from the top of the mountain on a sleeping tribe of Indians. They camped right under the cliff. During their stay, they were engaged in their annual fishing venture, fishing for smelt that ascend in enormous numbers the Sandy river. All were killed and buried under this mass of boulders and rocks. Only one man of this tribe was fortunate enough to be the sole survivor, as he was hunting for deer near the Cascades during this eventful night.

This was told to my father, a frontiersman, by the surviving Indian. My father in turn told me. The memory of the tale came to me when workmen, building the road during recent years, reported finding human skeletons."

Friday we arrived in Astoria and were glad of the fresh ocean breezes that greeted us.

Commends Group

I will say a word of recommendation about our Oregon state road commission. They deserve credit for the beautiful and good roads that we traveled over. They

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even try to beautify the roadsides by planting trees, shrubbery and flowers and by trimming and fostering existing vegetation.

Let us encourage them to keep the good work a going. They are doing their part for Oregon. However the press of the state of Oregon needs to be reminded that it does not advertise the matchless beauties of this Wallowa region enough. It warrants of greater publicity. It is in Oregon—Yes, Our Oregon.

HIKERS DELIGHT

Lets hike in the forest
  And climb the mountain bold!
Let's scale the eagles aerie
  And slide on glaciers, cold!
The freedoms urge,
Grips mightily the host.
The Spirit of the rover
  Rules uttermost.

The ocean and the rivers
  And streams or grassy plain;
The dunes and rocky seashore;
  The moor or high terrain;
The dells or vales;
  Or canyons, gorgeous, bold!
All lure and draw us onward.
  God's great! Behold!

THE HISTORIAN

AUGUST HILDEBRAND
Astoria, Oregon